DON PABLO LORENZO hosts RSPC ‘25

RSPC is back on track!

In an exhibition of journalistic prowess, Don Pablo Lorenzo Memorial High School, Zamboanga City, seized the spotlight as the esteemed host for the 2025 Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC). The event, held from March 5 to 7, underscored the school's commitment to showcasing and honing learners' creative skills.

With the theme, “Talino at Sining ng Pamamahayag: Lakas ng Kabataan para sa Makatarungan at Makabuluhang Pagbabago,” the said competition is scheduled for three days. This annual event was partaken by elementary and secondary students across the eight districts of Region 9.

School paper advisers, coaches, and scribes for different categories swarmed the opening program that was graced by the Schools Division Superintendent Dr. Ma. Liza R. Tabuilon, CESO V. (eme sa)

SDS Tabilon formally declared the opening of the Division Schools Press Conference 2025, emphasizing the pursuit of truth and the spirit of journalism with integrity, highlighting that freedom, knowledge, and creativity are the guiding strengths of the youth, empowering them to build a brighter and more informed future. (eme sa)

“Our Division Schools Press Conference 2025, is more than just a series of competitions, it is a celebration of teamwork, sportsmanship, and school spirit,” Public Schools District Supervisor of East District C, Dr. Rossalyn Z. Montealto, uttered as he gave the opening remarks. (eme sa)

Furthermore, the highlighted competition of pens is aimed at developing and enhancing the speaking and writing skills of participants.

The award-winning pieces of scribes will be acknowledged in the closing program, elevating the passion and purpose of students—many are called, but only a few are chosen.

Teenage pregnancy rises to 6.6% in 2023, survey says

The Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA) report reveals that 3,343 births were recorded to mothers aged 10-14 in 2023, up 6.6% from 2019, when 2,411 cases were recorded, falling under statutory rape.

Many pregnancies are caused by repeated sexual abuse with 38 young girls giving birth a second time and 17 young girls giving birth for the fifth time before the age of 20.

"If you look at the entire year of 2023, all births to children in 2023 would fall under the category of statutory rape. And the numbers are quite alarming," Former Executive Director of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD), Dr. Jeepy Perez, stated.

The report also disclosed that 99.9% of these pregnancies were linked to older men as the father, initiated by authority power with abusive and sexual intent.

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD), represented by Undersecretary Lisa Grace S. Bersales, is urging the swift enactment of the Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Bill (Senate Bill 1979) and the implementation of Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE).

“We cannot overemphasize the significance of having the bill enacted. It is my strong belief, and that of the agency, that its enactment will be essential in addressing the lingering concern of early childbearing and motherhood among a great number of our juvenile Filipino girls,” Bersales stated.

Teenage pregnancy is still a “high-risk” issue recorded by the Philippines Statistics Authority (PSA), and the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) measures aim to address sexual abuse and provide young girls and women with the essential support and skills needed for their safety and well-being.

Marcos: ‘No Formal Role’ Against Duterte Impeachment

President Ferdinand Romualdez “BBM” Marcos Jr. distanced himself against Sara Duterte’s process of Impeachment as the Vice President of the Philippines led by the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Marcos highlighted how the executive branch has no formal role, which only offers “moral suasion” in the legislative process.

“I have to keep reminding you. Wala kaming formal role in the entire impeachment process. If ever there’s an informal role. Makausap ko si Speaker, ‘yung congressman, si SP [Senate President] … Pero they will decide how they will proceed,” Marcos expounded.

The impeachment against Duterte was filed due to her accusation of violating the Constitution graft, corruption, and betrayal of public trust last February 5, being the first Philippine Vice President to face an impeachment. The impeachment passed the House with 215 votes but is still in trial in the Senate which will resume in June.

“Talagang we leave it to Congress, now, specifically the Senate, to exercise their own wisdom,” the President stated.

Marcos stated that he would convene a special session for the Senate only if requested by the Senate President.

VP SARA opposes Impeachment trial, files legal action

MANILA, PHILIPPINES – Vice President Sara Duterte filed legal action against her impeachment case at the Supreme Court last Friday, February 21.

In her petition, Duterte questioned the validity of her impeachment trial, seeking to terminate the Senate from proceeding with it. Together with her legal team, she believed that the impeachment lacked both constitutional and legal grounds, asserting that the trial was not supported by the law.

The Vice President's action has already fueled discussion amongst lawmakers and legal experts assuming that the petition was an attempt to delay the impeachment process, making her occupied to protect her constitutional rights. With this discussion, concerns were raising as for the balance of power between the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches.

The Supreme Court's decision regarding the trial on whether to proceed as planned will mark significant implications, setting a legal precedent on the limits of impeachment proceedings for the future of Philippine politics.

DOH reports Dengue Hotspots, alerts preventive measures

The Department of Health (DOH) reported three dengue hot spots in regions including the parts of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao issuing a warning over a potential outbreak.

In response to the increasing number of cases, DOH and other health authorities have strengthened monitoring and vector control strategies such as eliminating mosquito breeding grounds and using protective measures like mosquito nets and repellents to further prevent cases from spreading quickly.

Local governments are also mandated to implement programs regarding anti-dengue and improve the capacity of local health facilities to manage cases effectively.

This surge in rising dengue cases underscores the importance of the demand for proactive health interventions as well as public and government cooperation in mitigating a potential dengue outbreak.

Hammer head: DecapIPtated Tribe leader beheaded in Maguindanao del Sur

COTABATO CITY – A 65-year-old elder, Fernando Promboy of the Teduray-Lambangian tribe in Maguindanao del Sur, went missing last February 17 and was found decapitated on February 20 in Datu Hoffer Town.

The victim, an Indigenous people (IP) was attacked in Barangay Tugal, Sultan sa Barongis, an area of what authorities suspect to be a political land-related killing.

Promboy was found with his body already decomposing and his hand tied with a rope, along with his head unattached.

Local officials have now convicted the act and called for justice but still identifying the suspects.

Following the tribe leader's decapitation, the attack reinforced the ongoing threats faced by Indigenous leaders in Mindanao, highlighting the urgent need for stronger law enforcement and protection for IP communities, as mounting concerns regarding political issues and land disputes also rise.

Hammer: NEVER FORGIVE, NEVER FORGET Filipinos defend democracy, 39th EDSA Revolution

As the Philippines marked its 39th anniversary of the EDSA People Power Revolution, thousands of protestors gathered at the EDSA Shrine People Power Monument to uphold the commitment, to preserving the values of justice, democracy, and good governance in distorting historical events in 1986.

During the protest, Charm Maranan, spokesperson for Defend Southern Tagalog, advocated the importance of demonstrating better wages and livelihood programs. She also pointed out Vice President, Sara Duterte's impeachment trial due to the alleged misuse of funds.

With religious leaders and student organizations gathered, many academic institutions canceled classes to shift to alternative learning modes to also uphold historical revisionism. A Scholastica Prior, Sister Theody, highlighted solidarity with millions of Filipinos, praising the younger generations' active participation.

For the last 39 years, the ousting of Ferdinand Marcos Sr. led to Filipinos commencing the EDSA People Power Revolution, restoring the democracy of the country.

With the younger generation in a call to action, history is still preserved in the country, as these Filipinos continue to grip the need for good governance and accountability, marking a powerful symbol for Filipino justice.

DUTERTE VS. MALACANANG: Palace calls for Duterte’s fake news

MANILA, PHILIPPINES — Former President, Rodrigo Roa Duterte and Malacañang Palace raise a political dispute following Duterte’s accusation against President, Ferdinand Marcos Sr. veering toward dictatorship, fearing economic concerns.

During an “indignation” rally in Mandaue City, Duterte alleged that President Marcos intends to declare martial law to remain in power, like his late dictator father, Ferdinand Marcos Sr.

“I bet he will not step down after his term. It will be just like his father’s time. He will impose martial law, just like his father did, and our country will fall into chaos,” Duterte stated.

In response, the Malacanang dismissed the former president’s accusation as an attempt to mislead Filipinos against President Marcos. The Executive Secretary, Lucas Bersamin, states that Duterte’s remarks were “Baseless and Ridiculous,” pointing out Duterte’s record of alleged human rights violations and suppression of critics, and labeled him as a “one-man fake news factory.”

With Duterte’s remark, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC) prompts all political figures to avoid inflammatory discourse, emphasizing the importance of responsible political discourse.

The dispute between the political parties deepens the country’s political tensions, underscoring the importance of fact-checking and accountability in political discourse.

SC questions PhilHealth’s billion funds

The Supreme Court of the Philippines raised concerns over the government’s decision to transfer P89.9 billion in PhilHealth’s reserve funds to the national treasury for unprogrammed appropriations.

“PhilHealth’s funds should be reserved and cannot be subject to discretion for another purpose,” Associate Justice, Amy Lazaro-Javier emphasized that the funds should be exclusive to health programs and not for unrelated programs.

He also explained that projects such as the Panay-Guimaras-Negros (PGN) bridges project were fully funded by the Export-Import Bank of Korea, raising concerns about the necessity of reallocating PhilHealth funds.

With this issue, healthcare advocates like the Health Workers Party list opposed the transfer labeling it unconstitutional, worsening the public’s healthcare accessibility, and deepening the existing deficit.

Along with the controversies surrounding the country, PhilHealth’s fund deepens the political and financial tensions, raising serious concerns about healthcare financing and government properties.

ONLINE PUB NEWS

To foster journalistic excellence and hone the creative skills of learners, campus journalists under the category of online publishing converged during the second day of the Division Schools Press Conference (DSPC) held in Miputak East Central School on March 9, 2024.

Partaken by different schools, the competition kicked off with an orientation to both collaborative desktop publishing and online publishing spearheaded by Sir Al L. Cantery, Master Teacher of Pamansalan Elementary School.

“Always follow the heart,” Cantery embarked on.
w
For the English category, schools from Andres Bonifacio College (ABC), Dipolog Medical Center (DMC), and Zamboanga del Norte National High School (ZNNHS) in Turno were aiming for gold.

And Zamboanga del Norte National High School (ZNNHS) Turno for the Filipino category.
The highlighted competition is aimed at developing and enhancing the talents and skills of participants in online publishing.

This year’s DSPC bears the theme “Charting Truth: Journalism as a Catalyst for Positive Change in the Media Landscape of 2024,” emphasizing a trustworthy society that addresses the community's needs.

The award-winning scribes will be acknowledged during the closing program in the presence of key DepEd officials.

Zamboanga City launches RSPC 2025: “Para sa Makatarungan at Makabuluhang Pagbabago”

Campus journalists from different regions flaunted their skills and talents as Zamboanga City launched the 2025 Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) on March 5 at Don Pablo Lorenzo Memorial High School, showcasing the theme “Talino at Sining ng Pamamahayag: Lakas ng Kabataan para sa Makatarungan at Makabuluhang Pagbabago.”

The Honorable (blablabla) proudly opened the 3-day event and presented the delegates from the feight districts, along with their school paper advisers and coaches, swarming the first day.

“It is with immense gratitude and excitement that I stand before you today to celebrate a monumental moment in our journey. Today marks not just the

culmination of hard work, vision, and dedication, but also the beginning of countless opportunities for growth, learning, and progress," the (blablabla) expressed his/her inspirational message.

On days one and two, the conference embodies a series of sessions and contests that cover each specific category, from individual to group. The third day, March 7, is set to be the awarding ceremony.

Furthermore, the Regional Schools Press Conference (RSPC) is a preparation to provide each learner the opportunity to use their skills and talents for their future.

Mayor Uy honors outstanding workers at the 2024 PRAISE and Mayor's Special Recognition Awarding Ceremony

On December 20, the City Mayor of Dipolog, Darel Dexter T. Uy, personally honored outstanding workers during the 2024 PRAISE and Mayor's Special Recognition Awarding Ceremony, held alongside the annual Christmas Program, recognizing their exceptional contributions to public service.

In his heartfelt message, Mayor Uy said, "Congratulations to all the awardees. Your achievements reflect your commitment to public service and your tireless pursuit of excellence. You are the true pillars of our community."

The ceremony highlighted several prestigious awards, including Model Employee of the Year, Job Order Worker of the Year, and the Mayor's Special Recognition Award, which celebrate the hard work and dedication of those who go above and beyond in serving the city.

"The nominees here are already the best among the best. You are winners in our hearts, and your work is invaluable to our shared mission," Ms. Rosemarie P. Miranda, Chairperson of the PRAISE Committee, also shared her inspiring message.

The event was a poignant reminder of the collective effort that drives Dipolog City forward. Mayor Uy emphasized this in his closing remarks, "Today is not just about awards; it's about honoring the invaluable contributions of every individual who has helped build this city. May we continue to move forward together, with hope, faith, and love guiding us."

The ceremony was a celebration of more than just recognition—it was a testament to the hard work, dedication, and spirit of the people who make Dipolog City a better place for all.

Dipolog City switches on PASADI 2024

December 6, 2024 – Dipolog City embodied the Christmas spirit and festive season during the opening of Pasko sa Dipolog 2024 (PASADI) and the highly anticipated Switch on Ceremony at Rizal Avenue fronting Museo Dipolog.

“This evening as we switch on the lights of our city, let us also switch on the lights of our hearts of kindness, generosity, and gratitude. Let's look forward to a brighter and better 2025 for all of us here in Dipolog City and the entire province of Zamboanga del Norte,” Mayor Darel Uy enthused in his opening speech.

The night was filled with excitement as various districts of Dipolog took the stage, showcasing numerous performances. As the crowd gathered, Mayor Darel Dexter T. Uy stepped to flip the switch, lighting up the streets, and surrounding Museo Dipolog with vibrant and glowing lights.

Following the lighting of Christmas lights, the night continued with stunning performances by local talents, featuring Beng Eway, Mark Jones Duran, Micah Tuazon, Mary Ann Cabalida, and Road 21.

As the lights illuminated Dipolog City, PASADI marked the start of the holiday season and rekindled the spirit of unity among its community.

Philippines Enacts Maritime Laws Amidst Rising Tensions with China and Malaysia

As tensions in the South China Sea escalated, President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. signed an execution of two significant laws—the Philippine Maritime Zones Act and the Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act—on November 7, 2024, which aim to defend and claim its maritime boundaries and rights in the South China Sea.

The Philippine Maritime Zones Act (Republic Act No. 12064) aligns with the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which portrays the country’s maritime zones, together with its internal waters, archipelagic waters, territorial sea, contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone, and continental shelf.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Archipelagic Sea Lanes Act appoints the regulation of maritime traffic around the Philippine waters for the security of the country’s maritime environment.

Hence, the enactment of these laws has created tensions with neighboring countries, particularly China and Malaysia.

Mao Ning, China’s Foreign Ministry spokeswoman, opposed the new laws as the legislation is considered “illegal, null, and void," violating China’s territorial claims in the region.

Deputy Foreign Minister Mohamad Alamin lodged a formal protest, defending Malaysia's sovereignty regarding the inclusion of Sabah within the Philippines' territorial claims.

The Philippine government’s recently signed laws strengthen its commitment to protecting its maritime entitlements. However, the rising feud between neighboring countries highlights their concerns over the inherent regional maritime disputes.

CLIMATE CHANGE CYCLONES THE PHILIPPINES

Within October and November 2024, the Philippines encountered six tropical cyclones in three weeks, resulting in at least 150 fatalities and damaging agricultural and economic losses. Recent scientific studies highlighted the country's increasing vulnerability to typhoons due to climate change, increasing the frequency of deadly storms.

A study by World Weather Attribution (WWA) discovered that the formation of multiple typhoons in the region was approximately 70% due to a global temperature increase of 1.3°C, leading to the development of more severe tropical storms.

The probability of at least three category 3-5 typhoons hitting the country in a year has risen by 25%, posing a significant planning for disaster preparedness and resilience.

Damages from tropical cyclones have already reduced Filipino household incomes by 7%, expecting an annual increase of 7.2% by the year 2050.

The increasing frequency of typhoons in the Philippines due to climate change, emphasizes the need for covering adaptation and mitigation strategies. These typhoons are established to nourish every Filipino’s disaster preparedness and participation in global efforts to guard the nation’s future.

SURVEY NEWS

Turno-Nationalians see lack of inclusivity support, survey says

Students of Turno Campus have raised alarm over the insufficient support for inclusive education, highlighting the challenges faced by students with disabilities in accessing equal learning opportunities.

In a recent survey, 35.4% of the respondents were unsure if the school was inclusive of students with disabilities, 33.1% voted yes, and 31.5% believed that the school was not inclusive. Despite the school's efforts to create a conducive environment that fosters inclusiveness, the survey among students revealed otherwise.

Moreover, Mrs. Virginia E. Tagab, School Principal II, promised to create a better academic foundation fostering inclusivity and equality.

“I believe that the school is still progressing in inclusivity towards PWD students through following the DepEd Order of Inclusive Education,” Tagab expressed.

The Department of Health (DOH) reported that there are roughly around 2.2 million Filipinos who are disabled. This report highlights a large portion of a pivotal concern to strengthen inclusive learning.

SPEECH NEWS

“NO ONE LEFT BEHIND”

Senator Hontiveros graces SOGIE forum for youth, students

DIPOLOG CITY — Senator Risa Hontiveros underscored her commitment to inclusivity and equality as she led a pivotal forum on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression (SOGIE) for students and youth at Museo de Dipolog on Monday, October 14, 2024.

Titled “Promoting Inclusion and Innovation through SOGIE,” the event brought together students from leading academic institutions in Dipolog, including DMC College Foundation, Andres Bonifacio College, Jose Rizal Memorial State University, Zamboanga del Norte National High School – Turno, and the Dipag Rainbow Collective.

Sen. Hontiveros, an advocate for the LGBTQIA+ community, was welcomed by Mayor Darel Dexter Uy and former Mayor Evelyn Uy. Her visit began with a tour of the museum’s visual art exhibit and historical displays, which celebrated the rich heritage of the Subanen tribe and the cultural roots of Dipolog.

During the forum, Hontiveros engaged in a dialogue with the student attendees, focusing on the proposed SOGIE Equality Bill which aims to eliminate discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. She emphasized the critical need to establish safe spaces and ensure equal opportunities for all, irrespective of gender.

We must ensure that no one is left behind in the fight for equality. This bill is one step closer to securing a future where everyone, regardless of their identity, can live freely and with dignity.”

In her closing remarks, former Mayor Evelyn Uy praised Sen. Hontiveros for her commitment to defending the rights of marginalized communities and thanked the coordinators, students, and participants for their engagement.

BATANG DIPAG, ABANTE: BUSTALIÑO HIGHLIGHTS SCHOOL VISION AND PROGRESSION IN SOLGA 2024

via Prox Balbuena

“Lihok, Batang Dipag, ug wagtanga ang kasakit.”

With a heart for service and a vision for a progressive future, Juvimee Bustaliño, the Supreme Secondary Learner Government (SSLG) President, stood before thousands of Nationalians as she delivered her speech which aims to create school implementations that ambitions for a better community in the State of the Learner Government Address (SOLGA) on August 19, 2024.

The speech started with words filled with brightness as Bustaliño shared how things would improve in the future through successful leadership, a foresight filled with hope, and the mission of student leaders. She then continued to express how the project is aligned with the core values of DepEd: Makatao, Maka-Diyos, Makabansa, at Makakarunungan.

“We, the student leaders, whom you have enabled and empowered to serve you, will support you in achieving the bright future you envision for yourselves and the better and improved future we desire for our city, our country, and our world,” Bustaliño uttered as she states her plans and visions for the school year.

“Students of Dipolog, always remember to hope! And with hope, take action! Lagi't laging para sa bata, para sa bayan,” she continued.

“It is of most importance that students of the entire Dipolog City would know the programs and projects that are available to them, especially when it comes to learner formation, [and] learner protection and rights because it is a vital aspect of the student experience in school because we have to protect always the rights of the children and learners,” Cielbert Dondoyano Jr., Learner Formator - PDO I, stated in an interview.

Furthermore, the SOLGA also addressed the plans and projects of the SSLG through the leadership of Bustaliño for the school year 2024-2025 and hopes that the implementations they intend will not go in vain, but will continue to flourish.

SPEECH NEWS

Abao advocates action to fight misinformation

With a heart of sincerity and factualness, Ronald Randolf E. Abao, Special Science Teacher III, addresses her reflective remarks as she led to enhance the quality of spreading factual information to establish media literacy for each individual at a mini-conference in Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turno (ZNNHS-T) on Friday, January 10, 2024.

The speech started with words filled with (...) as Abao shared how (...).

MISINFORMATION
(statement niya about ani)

DISINFORMATION
(statement)

MALINFORMATION
(statement)

During the conference, she highlighted the Philippine 1987 Constitutional Law (Bill of Rights) under Article III, section IV, which protects the right to express oneself freely, assemble peacefully, and disseminate information without undue government interference.

“Speech layout”

In her closing remarks, Ronald Abao (....).

DSPC NEWS

Scribes exhibit journalistic excellence in DSPC 2025

DSPC IS BACK AT IT AGAIN!

In an exhibition of 21st-century journalistic prowess, an estimated 100 campus journalists across Dipolog City converged at the Division Schools Press Conference (DSPC) 2024, aiming to foster the transformative power of campus journalism at the Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turno on January 9-11, 2024.

Education Program Supervisor in English, Dr. Rosalio B. Conturno eagerly welcomed the delegates from the four Dipolog districts, which elementary and secondary students attended.

The event's guest speaker, Dr. Amelinda D. Montero, Chief of, Curriculum Implementation Division, CESE, graced the conference and expressed the utmost significance of journalism in our lives.

SDS Tabilon delivered her speech, leaving contestants inspired by her words: “(statement).”

This year’s DSPC theme is “Talino at Sining ng Pamamahayag: Lakas ng Kabataan para sa Makatarungan at Makabuluhang Pagbabago,” which exhibits the power of the youth to address societal issues for positive transformation.

The highlighted competition of pens aims to (...)

A notable moment of the event included the Journalists' Creed led by Elloise Julia A. Necesario from Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turno and an NSPC 2024 Most Outstanding Journalist of Region 9.

Moreover, Dr. Ma. Liza R. Tabilon, EDD CESO V formally declared the commencement of the three-day conference. Igniting joy among students.

The award-winning pieces of scribes will take place in the closing program, acknowledging learners for their journalistic excellence in the platform where any are called but only a few are chosen.

DSPC SPEECH NEWS

DSP 2024 takes center stage, (name) vows to highlight journalism's importance

Fostering journalistic excellence and upholding a responsible society, the (position) (name) oppressed the utmost significance of campus journalism during the opening of the Division Schools Press Conference (DSPC), held in Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turno on January 9, 2024.

According to (position with name), (statement).

"(statement)," (surname) remarked.

Furthermore, she/he conveyed her enthusiasm to continue emphasizing fora trustworthy society that addresses the needs of the community.

"This conference is a platform worthy of honing skills and attitudes towards responsible citizens," Tabilan uttered.

She added, leaving contestants inspired by her words: "Take this chance to elevate the power of campus journalism as you, journalists, are the hope of the nation!"

In previous years, this highlighted competition (significance sa dspc).

DRONE NEWS

Underwater Drone discovered in Bicol Region, prompting National Security Investigation

A remotely operated submersible drone was discovered by local fishermen near Barangay Iniwaran in San Pascual in the Bicol Region on December 30, 2024.

The underwater drone is labeled “HY-119” and is approximately six feet long, composed of PVC and metal but was immediately deactivated when discovered.

Assistant Director General of the National Security Council (NSC), Jonathan Malaya proved that the drone was used for reconnaissance and surveillance, posing issues about its origin and past activities within the Philippine waters.

Malaya together with the Philippine Navy is still investigating the origin and purpose of the drone which is currently in custody, and highlighted the national security implications of the drone, considering its Chinese markings.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is also involved in the investigation and focuses on tracing the drone’s vessel movements in the area and whether it was linked to any illegal activities.

Moreover, the Philippines is working with foreign counterparts to gather details about the incident but no country, including China, has yet claimed ownership of the drone.

The investigation of the underwater drone is still ongoing and the country is focusing on safeguarding its territorial rights, ensuring no unauthorized activities within its waters.

RICE NEWS

RICE-FOR-ALL: Department of Agriculture cuts rice prices

Department of Agriculture (DA) plans to reduce rice prices under the “Rice-for-All” initiative in January 2025.

The “Rice-for-All” program began in Metro Manila markets, and DA plans to introduce additional affordable rice varieties.

SULIT RICE
The rice is entirely broken but is still of good quality, ranging from ₱35 to ₱36 per kilo.

NUTRI RICE
The rice is in between well-milled and brown rice with more nutrients, ranging from ₱37 to ₱38 per kilo.

Previous prices of last year 2024, were dropping from ₱45 to finally reaching ₱40 per kilo, making more retailers lower their prices to match the government’s initiative.

As the program runs, the first quarter of 2025 is expected to pose challenges for farmers, in La Niña, affecting rice production.

Agriculture Secretary, Francisco Tiu Laurel Jr. led a meeting on January 3, to plan the removal of brands on rice products, focusing on eliminating the cause of premium rice imports from justifying high prices through marketing tactics.

NEWS

Hammerhead: STRIKE OUT LIES

Abao urges action to combat misinformation

With a heart of sincerity and factualness, Ronald Randolf E. Abao, Special Science Teacher III, addresses her reflective remarks as she leads a mini-conference to enhance the quality of spreading factual information for each individual in Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turno on Friday, January 10, 2024.

The conference started with words filled with insights as Abao shared how false information is a critical issue in today’s media landscape, bringing negative effects to a community. Discussing the three main sources of spreading fake news, misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation.

"Always remember that we as journalists can sometimes be the culprit or victim of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation," she indicated how the media can sometimes contribute and confront the problem.

Leading to negative results, Abao depicted how a single misinformation can affect a whole community, influencing individuals to believe and also spread the acquired news.

He added strategies to combat misinformation through stronger fact-checking, critical thinking, encouragement to inform, and media literacy.

“You should always ponder and think twice before you disseminate information”
SPEECH LAYOUT

In her closing statement, Abao encouraged every journalist to always have critical thinking ahead to ensure a piece of factual and trustworthy information.

Journalists aspire for Quality Education, survey says

Student-journalists from the Dipolog City Online Publishing English category have raised actions over the sustainable development goals to achieve in the year 2030.

In a recent survey, 80% of the respondents wished for quality education to be achieved and 20% desired decent work and economic growth.

“For the record, the Philippines is still in the lowest rank based on the qualities of its education, despite students spending 10 hours in the classroom. Quality education is the best choice to mold every student to the best of themselves,” a respondent stated, desiring hopes for the future education of every Filipino.

The Trinity University of Asia (TUA) reported that one of the issues is outdated curricula and conventional teaching methods challenge students’ preparation for the modern world. This report highlights a large portion of a pivotal concern to strengthen the quality of education.

STRAIGHT NEWS

Hammerhead: ONLINE CLASH

Scribes exhibit journalistic excellence at Online Publishing DSPC 2025

Campus journalists in the category of online publishing converged on the second day of the Division Schools Press Conference (DSPC), held in Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turnol on January 10, 2024.

The competition kicked off with an orientation to both collaborative desktop publishing and online publishing spearheaded by Teacher Ronald Randolf E. Abao, Special Science Teacher III.

“Freedom comes with great responsibility,” SPEECH LAYOUT

For the English and Filipino categories, schools from Dipolog Medical Center (DMC), and Zamboanga del Norte National High School-Turnol (ZNNHS-T) were aiming for gold.

The highlighted competition is aimed at developing and enhancing the talents and skills of participants in online publishing.

The award-winning scribes will be acknowledged during the closing program in the presence of key DepEd officials.

SPORTS

IT’S RAINING GOALS

Team A kicks down Team B in Futsal Exhibition Game, 4-1

In a heart-pounding match filled with skill, strategy, and resilience, Team A triumphantly carved their names as champions as they skillfully outplayed Team B in a game of two halves, 4-1, during the Futsal Exhibition Game 2025 at Zamboanga del Norte National High School - Turno.

Despite the gloomy, rainy weather, as the kickoff whistle blew, both teams were on top of their game, fiercely displaying their athletic stances and tactical nous on the field with Team A initiating the game with their calculated tactics. As the game progressed, both teams exchanged a series of corner kicks and attempted attacks, however, at 6:45 minutes in the game, the Spiker June Lennard Fiel from Team A, bolstered the crew as he shot a decisive corner kick, which earned them 1-0.

Faced with an uphill battle, Team B fired back in the second half, quickly attempting to recover from their early loss. Minutes and seconds flew by until Team B's spiker, Seth Ivan Magallanes, at 8:35 threw a corner kick flipping the odds back onto their side as they narrowly ended the first half in a deadlock, 1-1.

As the second half began, Team A maintained their intense momentum by strengthening their defense, going all out for their counter attacks to the opposing team. Ultimately at 7:20, Rhod Timbas delivered a chip kick, nabbing a 2-1 score difference.

Team B now facing a 2-1 deficit, came out with revitalized energy, nonetheless, they were no match for Team A's intricate maneuvers and strategies. United in the face of the adversary, Fiel with the assists of his teammates took control of the field and presided over the opposing team, bagging them another score, 3-1.

With only 3:15 minutes left in the game, the pressure was on as all players were on their feet while they sought out the strategies and gameplay of the opponents to gain victory in this crucial time. Keeping up with their blazing pace, Team A leads this round. As Team B attempted to score, with Team A's never-ending determination, they unfailingly gained more score with Jeiffer Camasura delivering the final blow, bringing home the title as victors with 4-1.

After the hard-fought match, June Lennard Fiel was chosen as the MVP of the game, which serves as a testament to his love for the sport and the hard work it took to achieve this title.

"I do believe that it is through having proper cooperation and a sense of unity within our team that was the crucial factor in order for us to win but to also enjoy the game," June Fiel, the MVP, expressed after the post-match.

This accomplishment not only gives way for the team to reach their goals but also deepens the comradeship and will aid in paving more opportunities for the team.

SPORTS FEATURE

Balik-Laro: Skipping through Filipino Heritage

“Tagu-taguan, maliwanag ang buwan!”

“Taas ng tinik!”

“Jack-en-Poy!”

Do you recall those carefree times when the joy of play transcended time and laughing filled the air? Imagine a period when kids would congregate, their eyes sparkling with anticipation, and go on skillful, nimble, and made-up adventures. In the world of sportsmanship, basketball and volleyball courts often rise dominantly. Whereas digital games often replace physical play, Laro ng Lahi is a reminder of our cherished Filipino heritage. Through its roots, this collection of native games not only reflects the Philippine culture but also the creativity and camaraderie of our ancestors, bringing together communities in the spirit of fun and competition.

The term "Laro ng Lahi" describes the traditional Filipino games that have delighted people through centuries. These games, though simple as they might be, have existed for generations and have survived the progression of time. The agility and teamwork required to play these games have paved the way for players to deepen their bond and connections.

The beauty of Laro ng Lahi lies in its accessibility. With nothing more than sticks, cans, or an open space, children and adults alike can immerse themselves in these timeless games. However, beyond play, these games foster a sense of belonging. Whether held during barangay fiestas, school sports fests, or national celebrations, or simple bonding sessions, Laro ng Lahi events bridge people from all walks of life.

In today’s fast-paced world, where many traditions face the threat of being forgotten, Laro ng Lahi reminds us to pause, connect, and celebrate with each other; highlighting what it truly means to be Filipino. These games are not just sports, they are a legacy, a living testament to our culture, and a joyful celebration of community spirit.

So the next time you see children or the elderly mindlessly playing these games, remember: it’s more than just a game, Its heritage in motion.

SPORTS COLUMN

The Greatest Medal: Champions Aren’t Made Alone

Success in the podium is not the absence of failure, nor does failure define the success of a race. To live in a world serenaded by the melodies of sports, wins, and trophies, is an inspiration many look up to. But behind the curtain lies the realities of athletes’ vulnerabilities in need of support and love like the old saying, “Tough trees need water too.”

A win is not a victory if there’s no one to cheer you on with it. Sports of various categories is a well-celebrated game that many Filipinos participate in, proudly displaying their vigorous moves and ignited passion. But the most crucial factor of an athlete’s victory doesn’t come from their focused mindset nor the shoes they were

during a match— but it is the warm support exerted by their loved ones that boosts their adrenaline into giving their best shot during their intense battles.

The Philippines takes pride for its notable athletes who etched names worldwide, bring home triumph. As Miss Universe 2018 Catriona Gray quoted, “The longest journey start with a single step,” which imparts a beautiful message to dreamers that the road to success all starts out with the small things. That support either big or small from friends and family are all contributors for the sweet gold medal.

To be surrounded by well-rounded people who has got you back even when your fail to meet standards are the real unspoken heroes in this world. Having someone to like you because of your achievements are outcomes of your hardships, but to have someone to love despite of the obstacles you face is the real treasure.

COLUMN

REYAL OR FA-KE?

The continuous sharing of often unverified information — misinformation has always been a social phenomenon that constantly plagues our day-to-day lives. It can come from one source to another and the next; increasing the likelihood of the spreading of falsehoods, distorting the truth, or even causing harm to individuals' reputations.

When it comes to campus journalism, it truly stands as an issue, as journalistic integrity frankly relies on verified, fact-based, and accurate information, in contrast to the unknowing and speculative nature of misinformation.

According to Redline (2024) about one-third (33%) of journalists encounter false or fabricated information regularly when working on stories, with 8% saying they deal with falsehoods extremely often and 24% fairly often. This underscores how fake news caused by misinformation is a continuing issue that needs proper awareness.

As a student journalist, we always uphold the truth and provide truthful information, but we can sometimes be the culprit or victim because of the rapid spread of information the tendency for false information to be disseminated becomes more likely. But in the same way, it is our responsibility to know how to recognize fact from fake and uphold accuracy to the community.

In conclusion, while the rapid spread of false information can sometimes pose a threat, it also presents an opportunity for us to be mindful in combating misinformation. We must sustain the principles of truth, honesty, and integrity in providing factual information through fact-checking and upholding media literacy. This way we can safeguard the credibility of our work and foster a trusted community where misinformation cannot thrive.

EDITORIAL

Imagine a nation where fully grown adults are unable to think critically about their daily activities; an unfortunate future none of us wants to see come alight. DepEd implements another approach for improvement for struggling Filipino students with the Academic Recovery and Accessible Learning (ARAL) Program. Like the implementation of the MATATAG Curriculum, this program aims to reform the learning capabilities of students with lesser learning comprehension or who are returning to school after a furlough so that they may foster the necessary thinking skills to become well-educated citizens of the nation.

Many Filipino students lay below the line of proficiency in mathematics, science, and reading. In 2022, it was revealed that Filipino students were among the world's weakest in these fields, highlighting the need for refinement. According to the Republic Act No. 12028, DepEd promises to cover the essential learning competencies for kindergarten-level learners and students from grades 1 to 10. President Marco also supports the act after he said, "By honing their essential learning competencies, we can equip our students with the foundational skills required to become visionaries, critical thinkers, and problem solvers essential for our nation's progress."

Many factors contribute to struggling students—like the economic inequality that disallows families to provide their children with quality education

—and the effects of these factors equal the cycle of learning losses over and over again. Thus, the need for an enhanced education system is imperative and a fundamental step to a progressive future for our nation. Like the MATATAG Curriculum which is facing obstacles against its success, it has promising expectations like how 267,900 teachers and personnel were trained for the MATATAG curriculum implementation.

However, in the opposition, concerns were still raised about whether the implementation of this program was necessary or not. Families have to deal with their scarce amount of financial resources to meet the demand for their kids' education. This problem also constitutes custodial conflict where some parents have different ideas about what their child should learn. Another strong problem against the ARAL Program is conflicts from across schools in the whole nation as it involves disagreements between students and teachers, raising difficulties in implementing such a program throughout the country.

We can combat these conflicts by engaging with the doubting parents and guardians by increasing awareness of the importance of education in the Philippines. Statistics must be updated regularly to showcase educational progress and upheave its value for the people and the country. In the context of scarce financial assets, the government should increase education funding for learning resources which, not only allows students to attend in schools but also contributes to a better system.

A nation rich with visionaries who can see the world with a brightened perspective, critical thinkers who can communicate their ideas and innovative solutions, and problem solvers to provide solutions for greater issues than these, is a nation equipped to face the global challenges the world may inflict. It only takes societal collaboration to make this fortunate prospect a reality for the Philippines. Such a dream could be led with the ARAL Program with a single intention: No student must be left behind.No Student Left Behind: ARAL Program's Promise to Philippine Education

FEATURE

A Global Goal of Quality EduACTION

In a fast-paced society like ours, the driving force for our collective development is but one simple thing: the quality of education. Among the seventeen significant Sustainable Development Goals, Quality Education is one of them, highlighting its keen importance for not just us humans, but also for the future of the generations to come. But how can we take action in our pursuit of success when our world is

constantly facing challenges and adversities that deprive us of opportunities to grow?

There have been many instances in which various nations alike are bestowed with opportunities to develop as a country. Take the Philippines, for instance. If we date back to several decades ago, European colonizers like the Spaniards had colonized the Philippines, marking the start of their religion of Christianity, which greatly influenced Filipino schools. Their principles and rules were evidently aligned with religious practices and standards. This shift in their quality of education meant that they, as a society, were brought closer and closer to the church.

Later on, the American colonizers arrived. They introduced the concept of "public schools" to Filipino citizens. This seemed to have sparked their interest and marked a new opportunity for education for all Filipinos. To this day, public schools are still existing and well-recognized; however, the fine line between expectations and reality in this concept has blurred beyond recognition.

There are still Filipinos out there who are presently living life without any means of education or basic learning. Poverty exists—and it’s thriving at an alarming rate. How can there be action for development when development and disillusionment coexist?

Well, it’s simple: the answer lies in our collective willingness to grow and develop together.

It’s Not As Shallow As It May Seem

We can grow and thrive on a global scale if we uplift one another. Opportunities should not merely be awaited but actively shared, especially when we are in a position to extend them to others. In the face of adversity, achieving sustainable development starts with us and our willingness to act.

By striving together and reaching for the stars, we can shape a future for the next generations—one filled with success, inspiration, and enlightenment. As our national hero, Dr. José Rizal, once said, *"Ang kabataan ang pag-asa ng bayan."* With this in mind, it is only fitting that we work toward a tomorrow that paves the way for collective growth and global development.

Darah Castillon: Editor-in-Chief
Darah, the visionary Editor-in-Chief of The Luminous, leads the publication with integrity and wise skill. Known for her ability to balance the pulse of the news cycle with her news articles, her leadership is grounded in fostering a collaborative environment where diverse voices are encouraged to thrive.

Haley Gabrielle Tan: Web Designer
With a background in graphic design and digital media, meet Haley-The Luminous' Web Designer. She is responsible for making the publication's digital presence visually compelling, informative, and user-friendly in a way that brings the content to real-life.

Isabelle Clark: Sports Writer
Isabelle is the dedicated Sports Writer for The Luminous, where she covers everything from global sporting events to the rise of local athletes. Her passion for the game shines through in her coverage, offering not just play-by-play details but also the deeper stories behind each victory and loss.

Beatriz Kyndra Ferolino: Feature Writer
From profiles of remarkable individuals to investigative reports on social trends and events, The Luminous' Feature Writer, Beatriz, offers articles and write-ups that captivate readers with their depth and thoughtful exploration, uncovering the extraordinary in the ordinary with her unique storytelling approach.

Johanna Merin Redillas: Editorial and Column Writer
Johanna, the Editorial Writer and Columnist of The Luminous, is known for her thoughtful and bold commentary on current events, culture, and social issues. With an incisive mind and fearless voice, her columns provoke deep thought and encourage critical thinking, creating articles that are a must-read for those who crave depth and perspective.

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